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**SMALL
GROUPS**
— *for* —
**THE REST
OF US**

how to design
your small-
groups system
*to reach the
fringes*

Foreword by
Pete
Wilson

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1

Small Groups Are Weird

Think It Over

- What is the driving vision for groups in your church?
- What group models have you seen work best in churches?
- How many options do you currently offer attendees for spiritual growth? Are any of those pulling people away from being in small groups?
- List the potential benefits of small groups for your church.
- What is your current groups system? Is it time to be changed or tweaked to be more effective?

2

Reaching the Fringes

Think It Over

- Who are we missing with our current connection strategies?
- What can we change to make it easier for introverts to be in community?
- What are some common interests we could use to rally men into groups?
- Is there a lifestyle or sin issue that should keep someone from being in a group?
- What kinds of issues might arise if we open community up to everyone?
- How can we design groups to reach those beyond the doors of our church?

3

Discipleship Is the Goal

Think It Over

- What is your current discipleship strategy?
- If you do not have a discipleship strategy, what is the first step for implementing one?
- How are you measuring spiritual growth through your small groups?
- What opportunities are you offering people to live out what they're learning?

4

A Clean Slate

Think It Over

- What needs to be blown up in your current groups system?
- What do you consider to be a win for your small groups?
- Who is the champion for groups at your church? If it is not the senior leader, why not?
- Are you putting enough into the budget for the future of groups?
- What do you need to clear away for groups to be successful?
- If nothing were impossible, what would you attempt with groups? Dream big!

5

Search for Leadership

Think It Over

- Do you currently have enough leaders to handle your growth?
- Where are you looking for most of your leaders?
- Do you need to consider lowering the bar for leadership?
- What kind of training do you offer your leaders? Should you move some of it online to reach more potential leaders?
- How well are you keeping your leaders? Are they free to take breaks?
- Do you have a clearly defined leadership pipeline for leaders to follow?
- Was your last staff hire an effective small-group leader from within your system? Why or why not?

6

Connecting the Crowd

Think It Over

- What is your current strategy for bringing new people into community? Is it effective?
- How difficult is it to start new groups in your church?
- Do you currently offer all-church studies for your groups? If not, why not?
- What are your on- and off-ramps for people to get into groups? Are they easy to take?
- How common is it for people on stage to talk about groups in your church?
- Where are small groups on your church's priority list? Are they functioning as a front door for people?

7

Setting Expectations

Think It Over

- Have you defined what an official small group is at your church? Are they different from ministry teams?
- What are the core elements every successful small group should experience?
- Do you agree that small-group leaders should not teach? Why or why not?
- What are your expectations for curriculum choices in your groups? How many of them are DVD-based teaching?
- What is the ideal size for groups at your church?
- Are you currently clear with your expectations for leaders and hosts? How can you better refine those expectations?

8

Those Questions

Think It Over

- What are the major questions you consistently hear from your small-group leaders?
- Are you answering questions they are not asking in your training?
- Do you currently have an agreement or covenant with your leaders?
- Do you believe that small groups and Sunday school can coexist successfully?
- What is the limit of care for your volunteer leaders?
- What is your process for hiring staff when the time is right?
- What other questions should you be asking right now?